

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 16087

EXDIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EG IS

SUBJECT: GOE SUSPICION OF ISRAELI INTENTION TO DRILL IN
RAMADAN FIELD

REF: (A) CAIRO 16085 (B) CAIRO 16086

1. ROSS CRAIG OF AMOCO TELEPHONED EMBOFF A SHORT TIME AGO (1500 LOCAL). HE HAD JUST BEEN ABLE TO CONTACT AMOCO OFFICE IN RAS SHUKAIR TO TRY TO GET SOME HARD INFORMATION ABOUT THE REPORTED MOVEMENT OF THE ISRAELI RIG.

2. THE RIG, CRAIG REPORTS, IS NOW LOCATED IN THE EXTREME NORTHEAST CORNER OF THE AMOCO CONCESSION BLOCK 305, APPROXIMATELY 6 KMS EAST RPT EAST OF THE RAMADAN FIELD. DEPT WILL RECALL THE NORTHEASTERN CORNER OF BLOCK 305 IS PART OF THE AREA GRANTED AMOCO IN ITS 1974 CONCESSION. AN ISRAELI WORKBOAT HAS BEEN IN BLOCK 305 AREA FOR THE LAST THREE OR FOUR MONTHS. AS OF AN HOUR AGO, THE RIG HAD BEEN CIRCLING THE AREA FOR ABOUT THREE OR FOUR HOURS PRESUMABLY TO FIND A SUITABLE ANCHORING SITE.

3. CRAIG STATES THAT THE INFORMATION ABOUT THE ISRAELI MARKER BUOYS ALLEGEDLY HAVEING BEEN SEEN IN THE 304.1 AREA CAME FROM AN AMOCO HELICOPTER, PILOTED BY AN EGYPTIAN, WHO YESTERDAY
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THOUGHT HE SAW BUOYS IN THE 304.1 AREA. IN A SECOND ATTEMPT

TO SPOT THE BUOYS THIS MORNING, HELICOPTER PILOT COULD NOT RPT
NOT FIND THEM.

4. SINCE ABOVE IS CONSIDERABLY LESS DISTURBING THAN ORIGINAL
REPORT, I TELEPHONED GAMASY AND GAVE HIM THE INFORMATION.
HE TOO, HAD BY THEN HEARD THAT, CONTRARY TO PREVIOUS EGYPTIAN
REPORTS, THERE ARE NO ISRAELI MARKER BUOYS AT 304.1. HIS
RECONNAISSANCE PEOPLE ARE STILL TRYING TO LOCATE THE PRECISE
LOCATION OF THE RIG, BUT WAS GRATIFIED TO HEAR THAT RIG IS
APPARENTLY OUTSIDE OF THE RAMADAN FIED. I TOLD THE GENERAL
THAT THE INCEDENT IS A REMINDER TO BOTH OF US THAT WE SHOULD
TREAT WITH CAUTION PANICKY REPORTS FROM OIL PEOPLE ABOUT WHAT
IS OR IS NOT HAPPENING AND WAIT TO HAVE ALL THE FACTS BEFORE
ARRIVING AT CONCLUSIONS. HE AGREED.HE WAS OBVIOUSLY RELIEVED
AND UNDERTOOK TO LET ME KNOW WHEN EGYPTIAN MILITARY HAS MORE
INFORMATION.

5. COMMENT: HOPEFULLY, EGYPTIANS WILL NOW CALM DOWN A BIT.
ASSUMING THE ISRAELI RIG POSITIONS ITSELF IN THE NORTHEASTERN
CORNER OF BLOC 305, IT WILL BE OUTSIDE OF THE RAMADAN FIELD.
IT IS OF COURSE STILL AN AREA FOR WHICH GOE GAVE AMOCO A
CONCESSION. AS I UNDERSTAND IT, WE REGARD THE LEGAL
POSITION OF AMOCO CONCESSION AREA GRANTED IN 1974 IN A SOMEWHAT
DIFFERENT LIGHT FROM AREAS GRANTED PRIOR TO THAT TIME.
I WOULD NEVERTHELESS EXPECT THE GOE WILL STILL BE CONCERNED
ABOUT ISRAELI DRILLING IN BLOCK 305 AND VIEW IT AS POACHING.
WOULD APPRECIATE INSTRUCTIONS AS TO WHAT POSITION THE DEPT
WISHES ME TO TAKE SHOULD EGYPTIANS PROTEST APPARENT
ISRAELI DRILLING INTENTIONS IN NORTHEAST CORNER OF 305.
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